

I want to say to you, BILL, thank you for all that you have meant to me personally. Thank you for what you meant to my family. Thank you for what you have meant to those of us who have had the honor of serving with you.

Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of controlling the remainder of the time for this special order, I yield to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE WILLIAM L. CLAY, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) will control the time for the minority.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, there are many Members who are gathering here this afternoon to pay tribute to Congressman CLAY.

Mr. Speaker, first, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, next year this Congress will be without the wit, the wisdom, insight, genius of one who has become a fixture and a fact of life. That loss is irreplaceable. In the next Congress, we will be without my friend, our colleague, Congressman WILLIAM "BILL" CLAY.

Throughout his career, BILL has been a trailblazer, a pathfinder, a pacesetter, an innovator, a leader.

Whether leading the fight to raise wages to a fair level, pushing through historical funding for college grants for disadvantaged students, taking on the fight to reduce class sizes, finding a way for federal employees to enjoy greater participation in the political process, initiating efforts to require employers to afford time for families, or reforming pension laws, BILL has stood firmly with workers, children, students, families and senior citizens.

He has been both the first and the last line of defense for the voiceless and voteless. More than a legislator, however, BILL is a noted author, a walking history book, a student, a teacher of science, a policymaker. But more than anything else, Mr. Speaker, he cares.

He is passionate when he speaks, because he is compassionate in his heart. This son of the Midwest has lived his life in sacrifice that millions could live their lives in pride.

He has manifested what his home State of Missouri symbolizes, "don't tell me, show me."

A dedicated husband, a loving father, he has helped to build this institution, the Congress of the United States.

His deeds have made a difference in many lives. Mr. Speaker, over time,

many will come and many more will go, but few, very few, will leave the imprint that BILL CLAY leaves, having given three decades of his life in service to others.

At times, he has been a single voice, a lone agent for change. He has dared to be a Daniel. Most of the time, however, he is, indeed, a coalition builder. He is comfortable in either role. But wherever he has gone, whatever he has done, whomever he has confronted, he has left a legacy. He has given a gift. He is giving of himself. He has made an impact.

He leaves us now, not to quit, but to fight another fight, to write another book, to write another chapter, to run another race of life.

WILLIAM "BILL" CLAY, we will miss you. I have been rewarded, fortunate, favored, grace, privileged, inspired, invigorated, sometimes frustrated, but forever richly empowered to have served with you, and most of all, to call you my friend.

I will dearly miss you. Congress indeed will miss you. The United States is honored to have had you to serve us so graciously.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON).

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join with my colleagues in paying tribute to Congressman BILL CLAY.

Congressman BILL CLAY is more than a friend. As a matter of fact, we are kind of relatives. We are relatives by marriage. My nephew is his cousin. I feel very close to Congressman CLAY, not only because we share family members, but because Congressman CLAY represents the kind of elected official that I have always wanted to be.

Congressman CLAY has had a brilliant career. He started out as a young man with a mission, a young man who decided to run for office, because he wanted to create change, not someone who wanted to run for office because they thought it was an upward mobility opportunity or it was a way to get a title, but it was a young man who had a mission and put his life on the line for his mission.

I think I really did begin to understand who he is when I learned about the work that he did in my hometown and his hometown, St. Louis, Missouri, when he challenged the establishment. As a young man, as a young turk, he said that he could not be comfortable with the fact that African Americans, Negroes would not, could not be hired in St. Louis by any of the major corporations.

He organized, he worked with other young turks and they confronted the establishment. He went to jail for what he believed in, because he decided to take on one of the most powerful banks in St. Louis who resisted the efforts of

these young people who said why are you not hiring qualified Negroes to fill these positions.

He went to jail for what he believed in. He literally did the kind of studying and assessment of the situation in St. Louis and helped to develop a document called the Anatomy of an Economic Murder. It is a report by CLAY that detailed the pitifully small number of blacks working for the city's big employers.

They were successful after a lot of hard work, a lot of organizing, a lot of getting people to confront what was happening. He was elected to the Congress of the United States in January of 1969. And, of course, this place has never been the same, because he came here with a mission, and he came here at a time when there were other young blacks elected to Congress who were determined they were going to bring about some change.

He came in with Shirley Chisholm and Lou Stokes. He and Lou Stokes became the best of friends. It is something wonderful about watching men who really do become friends, who respect each other, whose families become so very close that they take their vacations together. Young men who love each other, young men whose families began to live a life of commitment, with the wives and the children getting to know each other. I really have respect for those kinds of relationships.

What has he done here in Congress? He has been one of the strongest legislators that ever came to this place, not only has he gotten his bill signed into law. He has sponsored successfully over 295 pieces of legislation.

There are people who come here who never sponsor a piece of legislation. There are people who come here who do not even get an amendment to a bill. There are people who come here and go home and talk about all that they have done, really describing other people's work. So to get 295 pieces of legislation signed into law is a tremendous accomplishment. He served with distinction.

I talked about his brilliant career. But let me just outline for you or mention to you some of the things that he has done.

As a matter of fact, he has had the opportunity not only to serve on the committees where he was able to do some of this tremendous work, he is one of the few persons who has chaired at least two of the committees that I am going to talk a little bit about.

For 23 years, the Congressman served on the Postal Office and Civil Service Committee, chairing it from 1990 through 1994. Let me tell you, if you speak to any postal workers in America, they know who BILL CLAY is, because he fought some tremendous battles for them. He stood up for postal workers. He made sure that the work that he did would help to make working conditions better for them, would

help to deal with creating possibilities for upward mobility for them. So the postal system in America is better off because BILL CLAY served.

From 1989 to 1994, he served as chairman of the House Administration Subcommittee on Libraries and Memorials.

He was among 3 Members of the House assigned to recount ballots in the 1984 congressional election in Indiana's 8th District.

Again, he sponsored over 295 bills, but let me just tell you about some of the most important of them. In 1996, Congressman CLAY was instrumental in forcing a minimum wage increase through Congress, despite the adamant opposition of some of our friends from the other side of the aisle. But he has been a tremendous force dealing with historically black colleges and universities, Federal student grant and loan programs, class size reduction, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

He has done all of these things. And he can take credit for the Hatch Act Reform Law that was passed. In addition to that, he can take a lot of credit for the Family Medical Leave Act that was adopted by the Congress of the United States of America.

□ 1615

There are very few who will be able to match this brilliant career. I think he has left a mark on this House, not only because of his tremendous legislation, but because he is a friendly person who gets along with people. He makes us laugh even when we are mad at him. I have tried to stay mad with Congressman CLAY, but I cannot because he will walk up to me and tell me the funniest joke and get me laughing in ways that I never thought I would do.

He is a brilliant writer and author who is, I think, perhaps one of the best historians this House has ever known. If we want to know what happened in a particular year that he served here, just walk up to him and ask him about an issue, about legislation, about something that took place on this floor. He can recount chapter and verse and in detail what took place.

He is a prolific reader and a prolific writer. He is one of the original founders of the Congressional Black Caucus. I am able to serve in this House and work with a Congressional Black Caucus because of the work of BILL CLAY. He is a pioneer. He opened doors. He helped a lot of other people to dream that they could come here and do what he has done.

He is an icon in the city of my birth. I am proud of him. His family is proud of him. The City of St. Louis is proud of him. We all know that because BILL CLAY pioneered the efforts of African Americans to serve in this body, that a

lot of changes have taken place and the cause of African Americans, and others who were denied, who were marginalized, have been advanced because he served here. I am going to miss him.

They do not make BILL CLAYS anymore. There are people who come here who know nothing about the history and the struggles of our people. There are people who come to serve here not intending to make anybody angry, not intending to give up any perks, not intending to cause any trouble or make any waves. BILL CLAY made some waves. He caused some troubles, but he was one of the finest debaters that ever graced this floor.

A combination of everything that he has done, his debate, his work, his talent, all of that has helped him to become one of the most respected Members of Congress that ever served. I will miss him and I hope that I will be able to call him and ask for his assistance and get his wisdom for things that I will attempt to do.

Mr. Speaker, I say, "Thank you, BILL CLAY, for the service that you have given."

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) for those comments.

Next, I would like to yield to our distinguished leader from Congressman CLAY's home State, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT).

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me for the purpose of talking about Congressman BILL CLAY on the occasion of his retirement from the Congress.

Let me first say that I have known BILL CLAY for over 25 years. We both served on the St. Louis Board of Aldermen many years ago. We both come, obviously, from the same city and really in a way grew up together in the City of St. Louis and have had many of the same experiences in our time in politics.

I clearly remember when I first got elected to Congress, BILL CLAY invited me to lunch and we sat and talked about what it was like and what it meant to be in the Congress. He has been a mentor to me and has helped me in everything that I have done in public life.

He is one of the finest human beings that I have ever met. He is a leader in every sense of the word on a whole range of issues that go from civil rights, which he has been deeply and intimately involved in through his entire career, through education, through health care, through labor and human rights and every other issue that is of importance to the people in his district.

Perhaps most importantly he has always stayed deeply connected to the people who elected him. Never was

there a time when he did not go home regularly, meet with his constituents, solve problems in the community, help people with community issues, and try to be an advocate for all of the people that he represented.

He was also one who believed in politics. He is a politician in the truest sense of the word. And I admire that, I think, most in him, because he realized that to make change in our world, we have to be involved in political life.

For most of his career in the Congress and in the Board of Aldermen, he was also a committeeman in the City of St. Louis political operation. He believes in political action. He also believed in civil disobedience when political action could not get the job done. I remember one of the first times I learned about him, he was engaged in, I think, a sit-in at a prominent bank in St. Louis in order to get proper civil rights with regard to that institution and other institutions like it in St. Louis.

But never did his civil disobedience keep him from being involved in the political process. If he could get it done in the political process, he got it done in the political process. And to this day, he obviously has been involved in politics in the truest sense of the word.

He has raised a wonderful family and his children, to his everlasting credit, are also involved in politics. And, in fact, we know his son is now running for the seat that BILL is leaving and retiring from, and I believe and hope that he will be elected. But, again, he is in public service like his father was in public service, his daughter has been involved in politics. The whole family is focused on political life and how we can improve our country, how we can improve our community.

BILL CLAY never stops fighting for what he believes in. He is the dean of our delegation. We will miss him in every sense. He is tenacious. He never gives up a cause. He has a wonderful sense of humor. He always makes fun of himself and makes fun of the funny things in politics that we all laugh about.

In 32 years of service, no one fought harder for labor rights, for human rights, for education, and as I said, for his constituents. He was first elected in 1968. In his groundbreaking book, *Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress 1870 to 1991*, he wrote that the congressional election that year "... reflected the changing fortune of blacks in American politics." With his classmates, Shirley Chisholm and Louis Stokes, he came "... to Washington determined to seize the moment, to fight for justice, to raise issues that had been too long ignored and too little debated." And he did all of it.

Mr. Speaker, he was and remains a passionate and forceful voice for the

people in his district, for equal treatment of all Americans, regardless of race, regardless of ethnicity.

In representing the hopes and aspirations of the people of his district, he built an institution within this institution that has stood for equal representation and opportunity. He was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, which we are all so proud of today. He created one of the leading voices for African Americans in the Nation and an influential force in the House of Representatives.

I might add that if the majority changes in this institution in a few days, for the first time in the history of this institution, the chair of the Committee on Ways and Means will be an African American, the chair of the Committee on the Judiciary will be an African American. And I dare say if he had decided to stay, the chair of the Committee on Education and the Workforce would have been an African American. But none of that could have happened if BILL CLAY had not helped form the Congressional Black Caucus and helped people of minority status run for the Congress and become Members of the Congress. And we would not have as many African Americans and Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans in the Congress if he had not fought those fights many, many years ago.

He has also been on the side of working men and women. He was a leader on the minimum wage, protecting worker rights, getting safety in the workplace. He authored most of the legislation for working people over the last 32 years. He was a labor supporter who gave no ground to those who attacked the right to organize, who attacked worker protections and the right to earn a decent living. Working families in this country, labor union members have never had a better friend and they will never have a better friend in this Congress than BILL CLAY.

He was deeply committed to making sure that every child in this society should be able to realize their full potential. He was the leading supporter of historically black colleges, the beacons of advancement and achievement for African American young people. He helped craft the Family and Medical Leave law that has helped so many families today. He challenged every Member of this institution to live up to the ideas of equality and justice and enshrine those ideas into our laws.

We are going to miss BILL CLAY. I asked him before I came down here whether he had decided what he was going to do next year and he said, "Well, I have not even thought about it." I am sure he has not. But I am convinced that his service for the people of this country does not end with his leaving the Congress. He will continue to fight in other capacities for the people of this country.

This is a great leader. This is a heroic leader that we will miss in this institution. But I am only assured that knowing him, he will not stop the fight. He will be out on the field every day that he is on this earth fighting for children, fighting for civil rights, fighting for human rights, fighting for this democracy.

Finally, let me say that America is a better, more just, more civilly equal society today because of the work and the commitment and the passion and the leadership of BILL CLAY. We cannot say more about any of us who have ever served in this institution.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, "Thank you, BILL. God bless, you. God bless your family."

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I next yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD).

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I stand with my friends and colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus and there are three words that I think kind of epitomizes BILL CLAY. Those are: Determination, dedication, and distinguished.

He is a man of such distinction. I am so pleased that he, along with a few members of the Congressional Black Caucus, formed such a caucus. Otherwise, we would not be here together in unanimity trying to work on behalf of the constituents we serve in our districts.

This man of honor is the most effective and hard-working colleague in the House. He is from Missouri and he is from that "show me" State, so we have had to show him our interest and our determination and our true grit on educating the children of this country.

He has served tirelessly and been a strong advocate for America's children. This is why we have to show him, and continue to have to show him, where our hearts are in terms of educating our children. We have heard from other speakers before that he has been in the forefront fighting for workers' rights and was the key sponsor of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which was the first bill signed into law by President Clinton.

For nearly two decades, Congressman CLAY fought hard and tirelessly for the Hatch Act which is one of his labors of love and one of the really sterling pieces of legislation that was passed out on this floor and signed October, 1993, by President Clinton.

□ 1630

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) knew that he left his paw print and his mark on us, and so he then thought that he would get his son to come and follow in his footsteps, a young man of distinction. I hope that we do have the pleasure of continuing with a Clay Member.

He serves on many boards. One is the W.E.B. DuBois Foundation and the Jamestown Slave Museum. He also serves on boards for furthering education to our children, such as Benedict and Tougaloo colleges.

He is the founder of the William L. Clay Scholarship Fund, a nonprofit organization that will continue to give scholarships to young African-American students and other students who are aspiring to higher education.

Yes, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) will be missed in this body.

He is the recipient of numerous achievements, degrees, and awards. He is the author of many books, as we have been told, but one that really gives us a perspective of the history of the Congressional Black Caucus and black Members of Congress.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) will be sorely missed. I know I have not known him for 20-some years, but I tell my colleagues, the way he has whipped us around here to make sure that we will take care of the education for the children of this country, it seems like I have known him for 22 years. Godspeed to him, a great man.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor one of our most effective, hard working colleagues in the House. Congressman WILLIAM CLAY is the distinguished senior member of the Missouri congressional delegation. He is the Minority Ranking member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee where he has served as a tireless advocate for America's children.

As a native of St. Louis, WILLIAM L. CLAY was elected to the House of Representatives in 1968. And since that moment, Congressman CLAY has developed and promoted a legislative agenda focused on "workers' rights." He was a key sponsor of the Family and Medical Leave Act, H.R. 1, which was the first bill signed into law by President Clinton. For nearly two decades, Congressman CLAY worked on the Hatch Act reform which was one of his labors of love and was signed into law October 1993, by President Clinton.

Congressman CLAY serves on many boards, one of which is the board of the W.E.B. DuBois Foundation and the Jamestown Slave Museum. He has served on the boards of Benedict and Tougaloo colleges. He is the founder of the William L. Clay Scholarship Fund, a nonprofit, tax-exempt scholarship program which presently enrolls fifty-six students in twenty-one different schools.

Mr. CLAY holds a Bachelor of Science degree in history and political science from St. Louis University and is the recipient of numerous honorary degrees for his achievements as a legislator. The Congressman is author of two books: *To Kill or Not to Kill*, published in 1990, which deals with the savagery of capital punishment, and *Just Permanent Interests*, published in September 1992, which chronicles the history of Black Members of Congress.

Congressman CLAY will be solely missed by myself, his Congressional Black Caucus colleagues and all of us here in Congress. But we know he will continue to provide leadership, dedication and compassion for America's

workers and for education and our children for years to come.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a genuine American hero, a tireless fighter for inclusion in one of the Nation's most influential and prolific legislators in the history, my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) was a hero for justice before he came to Congress, and the gentleman's record in Congress is nothing short of amazing. Virtually every piece of legislation he touches has a direct and decisive impact on all Americans.

For his entire career, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) has been one of the Nation's preeminent fighters for families and for students. His impact has been universally felt, whether through his critical support for the Family and Medical Leave Act, or his work as Ranking Member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

For decades, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) has fought to give every American an opportunity to succeed. As the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) retires after a groundbreaking career, the Congressional Black Caucus salutes one of its founders and most extraordinary workers.

Through the work of this congressman and his wife Carol, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation have become two of the most important organizations in America. Thanks in part to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the impact of African-Americans in Congress has been enhanced exponentially. Thanks to Mrs. Clay and her work with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, the number of African Americans serving at all levels of government has been positively impacted forever.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) practices what he preaches. The scholarship fund that bears his name has awarded more than \$1.5 million in scholarships to minority students. Right now, 58 students are in college as a direct result of his efforts.

He is an author and a scholar. His three published books have held America's feet to the fire and forced this country to examine the treatment of minority issues in the highest levels of power.

A bold innovator, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) has consistently used his stature to help the less fortunate, to make America stronger, and to raise the standard of living for everyone in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to call the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY)

my friend. He has been there to support me and countless other Members of Congress during both good times and during some of the most challenging moments.

During this election season, when every candidate espouses his or her ability to lead, our youth should look to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) as a model of integrity, teamwork, and leadership. The Congress loses a true treasure with his retirement. But America can be thankful that we felt his influence on our lives during his remarkable life of service.

We know that we are not where we want to be, we know that we are not where we need to be, but we do know we are a long ways from where we were when the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) came.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am here today to honor and pay tribute to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), the Committee on Education and the Workforce ranking member, as he prepares to retire from Congress.

In the two terms I have served with him on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, he has proven himself to be a national leader on civil rights and human rights, a leader who truly cares about the people of his District and this country.

He has been a fighter for access to education for kids and access for post-secondary education for all Americans, especially women and minorities.

To serve in this Chamber for over 30 years displays supreme, supreme dedication. Yes, he is known by many as a great historian about Congress, but I will always remember him in the way in which he led his side of the aisle in the Committee on Education and the Workforce where I learned to respect this gentleman.

For 32 years, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) has been a powerful force on matters involving labor and civil service employees. This was best evidenced when he led the fight for the Family and Medical Leave Act, the first bill signed by President Bill Clinton. Working families have benefited greatly because of his excellent work in the U.S. Congress.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) was also remembered and will always be remembered as a successful national leader in our fight to defeat a very unfair version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act proposed by the House Republicans this 106th session. I will always remember how he pointed out the weaknesses in the work that they were doing and the amendments that they were able to pass because they had the majority.

I will always remember how the gentleman from Missouri pointed out the need for improving ESEA so that it

would reach those children from families of low income who, in many cases, are not being served properly, who have to attend classrooms with leaky roofs and bad lighting and all of the things that we would never want our children to have to go to school in.

I will always remember the way in which the gentleman from Missouri pointed out the weaknesses of this ESEA program, not only for the minority children for whom he has always fought so hard, but for all American children.

I say that many of the things that we have heard this morning and this afternoon, as the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) prepares to retire, is very true. But, especially, I learned that he had been one of the handful of Congressmen who founded the Black Caucus. I know that he saw that handful of Congressmen grow into a very powerful, large group of over 40 United States Representatives, better known as the Black Caucus.

When I came to this Congress, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) taught me the importance of building coalitions if I wanted to pass legislation in this United States Congress. It did not take me long to see a kaleidoscope of possibilities of what could be done when we joined the Black Caucus with a Hispanic Caucus and the Women's Caucus and the Native American Caucus and all those who have come together to be able to make the changes that are making life so much better in our United States, improving the quality of life of all Americans.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is a man who has made a difference for the people of St. Louis and all of America, not just the community that elected him. They elected him, and he earned the right to come to Congress because he was a vigorous and exciting campaigner, a tough campaigner. That is what we have seen him here as a Congressman, a man with a great deal of compassion, a great deal of commitment, and a man of integrity.

We owe the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) our gratitude for accepting the challenge as he did and for fighting the good fight. God bless the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) and God bless his family.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands for yielding to me for a few minutes of remarks about the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), our good friend.

What a career: Labor leader, civil rights leader, author, Member of Congress, founder of the Congressional Black Caucus.

However, no bio of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is likely to

contain one of his best qualities and one that will be especially missed in this body, and that is his wit, one of the sterling and best wits ever to hit the floor of the House. I know about what happens when it hits the floor.

One day, when people were coming to vote on the D.C. Appropriation, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) greeted people as they were going out, most of the Democrats having voted automatically for D.C., and said "You just voted for D.C. statehood." Even among the Democrats, there were some people who lost the blood in their face.

That is the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) for us. A man who somehow knew how to be serious and knew how to make fun. I tell my colleagues, in a body like this, we need that kind of Member.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is a Member who has always had the ability to laugh at himself, make us laugh at ourselves, and, yes, make himself laugh at himself.

My greatest regret that he is going is that he is going before his virtual inevitable chairmanship of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, a chairmanship that would have been mighty well earned. I guess one has to understand the special quality of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) to understand how a man can walk away when that may be so very close. Indeed, I believe it is so very close.

If one had had the kind of career that the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) has had, one does not have to hang around waiting for more. To be sure, there is a lot the gentleman from Missouri could have done as chair, given what he has already done.

But the fact is that his roster of accomplishments would make anything he did as chair of a full committee icing on the cake: his work on notice for plant closings, if we can remember when those plants were closing precipitously all around the country; of course his work that has been cited in the Family Medical and Leave Act; the way he has blocked repeal of measures for affirmative action; his work on Hatch Act reform, his work on IRS reform. This is all very serious legislation.

What is important to remember about the gentleman from Missouri, for me at least, is that the man brought his career into the House. In the streets, he was a civil rights demonstrator and activist and a labor man. In this House, he became a labor Democrat and a civil rights Democrat. Few Members have been able to make that seamless a transition so that their entire life reflects what they have stood for. He did not have to change up when he came into the House. He simply brought his great principles, his great causes, and found a way to achieve what he had worked for outside on the inside.

The gentleman from Missouri was one of the first critical mass of African Americans to serve in this House.

□ 1645

They got to have a small number, but large enough to form their first caucus and then to become a model for many others groups who then formed their own caucuses to press in a cohesive and unified way for their constituents.

BILL fought his way into Congress by fighting on the front lines of the labor movement struggle and the civil rights struggle. I must say there are probably few Members who can look back at their career and say they spent their first term as an alderman, the first 4 months of a 9-month term, actually in jail for his constituents. Talk about fibrous transitions. If that does not show it, I do not know what does. But it is one of those actions that cemented BILL CLAY in the hearts and minds of his constituents, and no one could have gotten him out of here unless he walked away from here if they had wanted to.

BILL brought that willingness to fight here, because that is part of who the man is, and it is quite amazing to see that a man with that kind of street smarts and street activity would have a side of him that most Members do not know. It is reflected in one of perhaps the longest of his writings, "Just Permanent Interests," his book about black Americans in Congress from 1970 to 1991. It is an extraordinary compendium and reference and eye opener. That is BILL CLAY the scholar. That is this multifaceted man.

Well, I can only say to my good friend that we are told that a younger, more handsome CLAY is about to grace this floor. We will be mindful, however, that Representative WILLIAM L. CLAY was an original.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands for yielding to me.

I have sat and listened and been thrilled and delighted and smiled hearing all of the accolades that have been bestowed upon BILL CLAY as he prepares to retire, and I agree with everything that I have heard. It occurred to me as I listened, though, that I knew BILL CLAY perhaps better than I did any Member of Congress, other than those from Chicago, in terms of being way back, and that is because St. Louis is so close to Chicago. We used to call it the big city, and felt we were one of the suburban communities of St. Louis.

But BILL CLAY has always represented a large urban area, which is not always the easiest to represent. There are large numbers of low-income people, people who are searching and seeking. In many instances in the Mid-

west and the north there are people who migrated from southern areas of the country, and so I know it well.

The thing that has impressed me the most about the gentleman from Missouri is that the same comments that we hear from his colleagues in the House we also hear from the people on the streets in St. Louis. I have never met a person in St. Louis who did not feel that they knew BILL CLAY. And it was not that they knew him through what they had read in the newspapers, or they knew him from what they had seen on TV, they simply felt close to the man. So the fact that he could give people a feeling of empowerment, that he could cause the ordinary person in a community, in a neighborhood, in the inner city to feel empowered is the true mark of a genius, a man who can transcend, a man who can communicate effectively, who can talk to the people on the corner, walk in the pool room, walk into the neighborhood tavern, walk in the alley where the people are working on their automobiles and having a beer in the summertime and be at home.

We used to work BILL to death, I guess, in the 1970s. There were not as many African American Members of Congress. I was involved with community action groups and organizations, and every time we needed a speaker, we would be looking, and we would just work BILL CLAY and Shirley Chisholm to death. We would work them. They would be running from one place to another. But BILL never said no unless he just had to. If he could make it, he would.

So, BILL, as you leave, I know you leave with the satisfaction that you have done a good job. You leave with the understanding that you have epitomized the words of Kipling when he said, "You have learned to walk and talk with kings and queens, and you never lost the common touch. All people have mattered with you, but none too much. And, yes, you have given the unforgiven moment, with 60 seconds worth of distance run. Yours has been not only these chambers but yours has been the earth and all that is in it. And, yes, your father would say you have been a man, my son."

Good luck and best wishes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH).

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

It is with great humility and admiration that I stand before this body today for perhaps the most profound few minutes that I can imagine to pay tribute to a man who is a hero to many, many others and a hero to myself; a man who has paved the way for so many African American Members of Congress through his many, many years of distinguished service.

I like to say that my familiarity, my contact with BILL CLAY goes back

many decades. Indeed, forever etched in my mind is a photograph of him as a young man, tall, handsome, a large Afro, being sworn in as a Member of the city council in St. Louis, Missouri, many, many years ago. For those of us who were young at that time and who also wore Afros, it was quite an honor, quite a motivation, quite an inspirational moment to see someone who looked like us, who came from the same type of background and neighborhood as we did, to finally be accepted into a government office, into the city council in St. Louis. Indeed, it was an inspiration, an inspiration that still motivates me even today.

It is probably one of the most pleasurable things that one can ever experience, having looked at a hero, at a role model, at someone that one idolizes, and then to have God's blessing of serving with him as a colleague in the Congress. But between that swearing in and my coming to Washington as a Member of this body, BILL CLAY touched my life on many different occasions.

I can remember a time, a period in American life when in my own home City of Chicago, in my home State of Illinois, when as a young man I was an activist, and there was a lot of turmoil and controversy, a lot of violence that occurred. A close, close friend of mine, Fred Hampton, a member of the Black Panther Party in Illinois, was murdered on December 4, 1969. And as a member of that organization, I do recall the kind of terror that was in my heart, the fear that existed among all of us as we were being hunted down by police agencies and the FBI all across this Nation. We did not know where to turn or who to turn to. But on the horizon BILL CLAY and other Members of the Congressional Black Caucus did come into Chicago and conducted a hearing in Chicago that kind of settled the turmoil, brought clarity to the situation. The impact of the Congressional Black Caucus in Chicago will never, never be fully told, but I can say this, that without the intervention of BILL CLAY and other Members of the Black Caucus, then I certainly would not be standing here today.

Let me just say that since I have been a Member of this body and have experienced not only his friendship and his professionalism, one thing that keeps me thinking and admiring BILL CLAY the most is that he really cares for this institution, he cares for everything about it. BILL CLAY understands this institution, the potential of this institution, and he works very, very hard to realize that potential for his constituents and for all Americans.

BILL CLAY understands the importance of the Congressional Black Caucus. Indeed, he was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. BILL CLAY understands all the other allied institutions and agencies that af-

fect this caucus. BILL CLAY is probably the single most profound individual, most consistent individual to look at the affairs of the Democratic National Club.

Mr. Speaker, that is another thing. BILL CLAY called me one morning a few years ago and asked me would I serve on the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. This man cares about this institution and all the allied institutions and all the supportive institutions and all the institutions that impact on America's people, and I say to my colleagues that we will miss this giant of a man. We will miss this Member of Congress, this trailblazer, who in his own humbleness has touched many, many of us for many, many years.

I will say to BILL that my wife Carolyn asked me to pass on to him and his wife Carol that she is going to miss the letters that he sends to the spouses, our spouses, Members of the Black Caucus spouses, as he critique the actions and attitudes and the history and the legacy of the Congressional Black Caucus. The gentleman has been a friend, a person whose humor has really made this place a different place than what it could have been.

□ 1700

He has been a beacon for us all. His history, his presentation, his involvement in this Congress certainly is unparalleled; and I thank him so very, very much. And to him and his wife, Carol, I say Godspeed and thank you for all the service that he provided. We are all going to miss him.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great humility and admiration that I stand before this body today to pay tribute to Congressman BILL CLAY, a man who has paved the way for so many African American members of Congress through this many years of distinguished service.

In a day and age when so many Americans are disillusioned with politics and politicians, BILL's historic tenure in this house represents the virtue and honor of a career in public service. Even before entering Congress, BILL tirelessly fought for equality for African Americans by organizing protests against racial inequality. As a member of Congress, BILL has been staunch advocate for those most in need of a voice in Washington.

As the ranking member of the Education and Labor Committee and the former Chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee, BILL used his influential position to advocate for a stronger educational system and ensure greater worker protections.

As the founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, BILL established a forum in which minority issues can be addressed. BILL was the glue that kept the caucus together. BILL has also fought tirelessly for working families through such efforts like the Family and Medical Leave Act.

BILL is also a wonderful writer and communicator. His book, "To Kill Or Not To Kill," made us all think long and hard about the death penalty. Also, his book "Just Permanent Interests" is a testament about African Americans in Congress.

Let there be no question that the departure of BILL will leave a void in this body. We will miss his thunderous oratories, his tireless work ethic and his uncompromising morals. And yes, we will even miss his witty criticism of the Congressional Black Caucus' annual meetings. However, he will always live in this house because his legendary accomplishments and statesmanship are an example to us all.

BILL thank you for your leadership and friendship. It has been a personal privilege to work with a man I have admired so much throughout my life. I wish you and your wife Carol well.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend and colleague, WILLIAM CLAY. BILL and I have known each other for over thirty years, I have campaigned on his behalf, we have worked on legislation together and we have developed a deep abiding friendship. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to stand here today and pay tribute to both a true gentleman and a fine public servant. While in Congress, BILL CLAY worked to enact the Family and Medical Leave Act, ERISA, to increase the minimum wage, strengthen worker protections of union members, and to ensure fair treatment and pensions for women.

Congressman CLAY is the third most senior member of the House of Representatives, the dean of the Missouri Congressional delegation and ranking member of the Committee on Education and Workforce and former Chairman of the Postal Operation and Civil Service Committee. He has also served as the Historian for the Congressional Black Caucus.

In his role as the Ranking Member on the Committee on Education and Workforce, in addition to the aforementioned accomplishments, he enacted numerous education provisions; including those strengthening Head Start, elementary and secondary education programs, and college financial aid programs. Just last year, he helped engineer a student loan forgiveness provision for new teachers going into inner city schools and a provision which reduced the interest students pay on educational loans. Additionally, he has always been a strong voice and champion for working families.

Mr. Speaker, this moment is bittersweet. It is with great pride and with sadness that I bid farewell to my dear colleague. The price is due to the great work and fellowship that I have shared with BILL and the sadness is because I will dearly miss our one on one interactions, his counsel and his presence. BILL has always stood for justice, fairness, and equality for all citizens. His sense of commitment and morality has always been that every person is entitled to live in a decent home, in a safe neighborhood, receive a quality education, be paid commensurate with one's experience, and receive the best Medicare regardless of social status. He has served these principles in an exceptional way—he will be sorely missed by the nation and by me.

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, the past few years have witnessed the departure of some of this institution and the Nation's most distinguished and effective legislators. This year certainly is no exception. With the departure of our dear colleague, dean of the Missouri delegation, third ranking Member of the House, and distinguished gentleman from the 1st Congressional

District of Missouri, the Honorable WILLIAM L. CLAY, the House is losing one of its most extraordinary members.

Educational trailblazer, legislator, author, political firebrand, and passionate civil rights activists and advocate for the rights of working men and women throughout this country, BILL CLAY has concentrated his congressional career on improving working conditions for men and women, ensuring that every child, regardless of their socioeconomic background, has equal entitlement to a quality educational foundation, assuring Americans a quality health care network, and providing seniors with a safe and secure retirement system.

As the ranking and senior Democratic member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, BILL has influenced and had a major impact on most of the major Federal education and labor initiatives to have occurred over more than a quarter of a century. Appointed to the then-Education and Labor Committee in 1969, he has been one of the committee's staunchest proponents of higher education funding, and for maintaining a decent, realistic, and respectable living wage for employees. He has been a stalwart supporter of this Nation's 39 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), many of which have produced some of the Nation's most distinguished and successful African American public servants, business entrepreneurs, educators, and government officials.

During his illustrious congressional career, BILL has sponsored or co-sponsored nearly 300 bills which were enacted into law. Among them, legislation to increase funding for higher education and the minimum wage; reform of the Hatch Act; and providing economic assistance and job training for dislocated workers. Also, legislation which reauthorized the Pell Grants Program for disadvantaged students; the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act; the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act; and the Higher Education Act. As my colleagues know, these citations scratch just the surface of the thousands of history-making bills with which "the distinguished gentleman from Missouri," has been chiefly responsible for or affiliated with during his remarkable 32 years in Congress.

Early in his career, BILL worked to develop the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), a law which protects private pension and welfare benefits. He played a strategic role in legislation that led to the enactment of Cobra, which provides qualified beneficiaries, such as surviving and/or divorced spouses, and terminated and reduced-time employees, to continue health insurance coverage in employer provided group health plans for a transitional period until such time as they are able to obtain other coverage. One of the bills with which this bill is perhaps best identified, is the Family and Medical Leave Act, landmark legislation which provides employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave annually to care for a new born infant or sick and infirm family members. The Family and Medical Leave Act was the first bill signed into law by President Clinton shortly after his 1992 inauguration and it has been a Godsend to millions of workers and families faced with family emergencies.

Prior to its dismantling, BILL chaired the Post Office and Civil Service Committee from

1990–1994. He also chaired the Franking Commission, and from 1989 to 1994 served on the House Administration Committee, chairing the committee's Subcommittee on Libraries and Memorials. In 1990, he became one of the first Members of the House appointed to the Office of Fair Employment Practices Committee.

BILL has spent nearly 50 of his 69 years fighting for the civil rights and equal opportunities for all minorities.

As a founder and senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus, BILL's advocacy for civil and voting rights opened the doors that made it possible for more junior members of the caucus to run successfully for election to the Congress. As a longtime board member of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc., he has been one of the most steadfast proponents of the organization's excellent educational programs.

BILL's passion for education also led to his founding of the William L. Clay Scholarship and Research Fund in St. Louis. Because of his efforts, more than 100 St. Louis area students have been able to attend colleges and universities throughout the United States.

A serious and astute student of the history of this Nation, BILL is the published author of two books, "To Kill Or Not To Kill," which examines America's capital punishment system and its disproportionate impact on African Americans; and "Just Permanent Interests: Black Americans in Congress 1870–1992." BILL currently is working to complete his third publication, "Racism in the White House."

Mr. Speaker, students and employees throughout America can thank BILL CLAY for many of the educational opportunities and substantially improved workers benefits they enjoy today. He has been their biggest and most ardent supporter, spending the better part of his adult life, and certainly his entire congressional career, committed to improving the social condition for them and for all Americans. It has been an honor and a distinct pleasure to serve with him in the Congress. As he prepares to say farewell to this esteemed institution where he has had such a tremendous impact on the social fabric of this country, may he do so proudly, grounded in the knowledge that he leaves behind a legacy that is secure for the ages.

Good luck and Godspeed BILL. May you and Carol enjoy a long, healthy, and prosperous retirement.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to have an opportunity to serve with our friend and colleague BILL CLAY, whose contributions during 32 years of service in this body have earned him widespread recognition as one of America's great voices for justice and opportunity during the last half of the 20th century.

To me, and I'm sure to everyone who follows in his footsteps, he has been a personal mentor—one who has inspired us and guided us with his extraordinary skills; dedication and integrity; intellect and eloquence; and his thoughtful and gentlemanly demeanor that somehow makes his tenacious fighting spirit all the more effective.

Many Americans believe that those of us who serve in public life may tend to overstate things from time to time. But that would be dif-

ficult to do in reference to BILL CLAY's record of accomplishment.

There is just so much that he has done that benefits people in his home state of Missouri and throughout the country.

He fought for Hatch Act reforms for two decades, and eventually succeeded. In fact, he played a major role in shaping and passing a number of major initiatives that have helped ensure safety and fairness in the workplace.

His imprint can be found on virtually every federal educational program that exists today, from Head Start to college aid.

He was among those who engineered a student loan forgiveness program that eases the student payments on educational loans and provides an incentive to attract qualified new teachers into schools where they are needed the most. And this year, he is a leader in the effort to reauthorize the Class Size Reduction Act, which is adding 100,000 teachers in school systems throughout the country.

He is a thinker and writer who has authored several important books; a philanthropist who founded a scholarship fund that has helped scores of young people to fulfill their potential; a public servant whose efforts have brought enduring changes; and a committed citizen who has more than lived up to his belief that everyone should have a decent home in a safe neighborhood; receive a quality education; have an opportunity to work at a job commensurate with his or her skills and abilities, and receive quality health care regardless of income or social status.

I know I will personally miss BILL CLAY's friendship and leadership in this body.

More importantly, he will be missed by the country at-large.

But anyone who knows him knows that he is not the kind of person who will just vanish from sight.

Whether retired or on active duty, you can bet that BILL CLAY will be a caring, involved citizen, continuing to do everything in his power to make life better for others and, in so doing, to provide inspiration and guidance for us all.

And, for that, we can all be thankful.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and retiring colleague, BILL CLAY.

For nearly three decades, you have served African Americans across the nation very capably, Members of Congress included. When you founded the Congressional Black Caucus several decades ago, the environment on Capitol Hill and in America was very different. It was a time of struggle, and in spite of the many victories we had won during the Civil Rights Struggle, you knew we still had a long way to go. Congressman CLAY, the victories you won in those exciting, turbulent days mean so much for African Americans today.

Many of my colleagues gathered here today will remember that in Post-Civil War America, Congress passed the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. While 22 African-Americans were elected to Congress in the following years, the promise of these amendments was destroyed by Jim Crow laws. After decades of struggle, the sacrifices of nonviolent civil rights protesters, such as yourself, spurred Congress to approve the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The passage of the Voting Rights Act was perhaps the

most important victory won by BILL CLAY and the Civil Rights Movement. Today, with what I hope will be the imminent Democratic takeover of the House of Representatives, our nation stands on the eve of a historic moment as the prize of the Civil Rights Movement—the Voting Rights Act—bears fruit.

The fruit comes in the form of African American legislators like myself, gaining seniority, the foundation of power in Congress. In fact, the upcoming Congressional Election represents a significant opportunity where, for the first time in United States history, Congressional Communities would be chaired by 3 African Americans: Congressmen CHARLIE RANGEL, JULIAN DIXON and JOHN CONYERS would Chair the Ways and Means Committee, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and Judiciary Committees, respectively. Further, as many as 10 African Americans, including myself, would chair important Subcommittees if the Democrats win the majority. BILL, this is your legacy, and I salute you for it.

I am also pleased to announce that your work will be continued in the 107th Congress. For example, earlier today, like you, I have long been interested in promoting sound public policies that will ensure that students living in economically disadvantaged areas have the same educational opportunities as children in affluent areas.

That's why I introduced legislation to create Educational Empowerment Zones. This legislation is premised on the idea that giving teachers meaningful incentives to live in the communities where they teach will improve the educational opportunities for children in low-income areas. My legislation will provide for the establishment of federally designated areas where federal aid and private funding can be targeted to increase teacher salaries, provide for loan forgiveness, and enhance teacher-training opportunities. The specific choice of the Educational Empowerment Zones will be based on factors such as the number of low-income families, the dropout rate, the rate of teen pregnancy and class size.

BILL, in addition to promoting initiatives like my Educational Empowerment Zones, I am looking forward to guarding your legacy by working with the Congressional Black Caucus to take the lead on efforts to close the Digital Divide. As we travel through our Districts and look in the faces of our children, we see the tremendous potential within these kids. It is our duty to ensure that this potential is not wasted because they do not have access to technology.

As we all know, our rapidly growing electronic economy will drive our growth and prosperity throughout the new century. Yet, business leaders and policy makers must work together to ensure that everyone in our society is positioned to reap the benefits of, and participate fully in, the new digital age. In my opinion, the effort to close the digital divide represents the first major civil and economics rights struggle in the new millennium.

We've seen the statistics, and we know people on the downside of the digital divide—the 'have nots'—are already at a competitive disadvantage in pursuing educational and professional opportunities in an increasingly on-line society.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will be able to work together on this and similar initiatives aimed at closing the Digital Divide.

In closing, let me say again, BILL, that I salute you for your accomplishments in Congress and the legacy you will leave us. I hope that we will be able to guard that legacy and keep opening doors of opportunity for all children in America.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to a good friend and colleague, Congressman WILLIAM "BILL" CLAY. I have had the pleasure of serving with BILL on the Education and Workforce Committee since my election in 1992.

Throughout his service, BILL CLAY has been a fighter—a fighter for the hard working Americans who have made our country a global economic leader, a fighter for the disadvantaged, a fighter for public education but most of all a fighter for social justice.

Looking back over his career as Chairman of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service to the Committee on House Administration, to his current membership as Ranking Member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, we find his imprimatur on numerous initiatives. He stewarded the landmark Family and Medical Leave Act into law, the Hatch Act reform bill which allows federal employees to participate in the political process, legislation prohibiting age-based discrimination in employee benefits, legislation providing federal loan guarantees for construction projects at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

BILL CLAY's penchant for being a fighter has served his constituents, this Congress and especially the Democrats on the Education and Workforce Committee well. For those of us who served with him on the Education Committee, his leadership was crucial at a time when we were in the Minority. Under BILL CLAY's leadership we turned back radical efforts to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education, defeated school voucher proposals, and championed meaningful education reforms and programs, like Class Size Reduction and School Modernization, that help the many, not just the few.

As an original founder of the Congressional Black Caucus, BILL CLAY started us on the path to where we are today, a highly respected body that is on the front lines championing the causes of the African American community in the legislative process.

I have no doubts that BILL will continue the good fight after he leaves Congress. I look forward to his continued leadership.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in paying tribute to BILL CLAY.

I have known BILL CLAY best as my ranking member on the Education Committee for the past six years.

During that time, I have seen firsthand BILL's tireless efforts for working families in this country.

Whether he is fighting to increase the minimum wage, to protect workers from overtime abuses, or improve workplace safety, BILL CLAY cares about American workers.

And he cares about their children. He is a leader in our efforts to make sure that every American children has a safe, sound school to go to, with small classes and well-trained teachers.

In Labor and Education Committee hearings, and here on the House floor, BILL CLAY speaks up for those Americans who cannot always speak up for themselves.

American working families have always been able to count on BILL CLAY to do the right thing. They will miss him in Congress, just as those of us who serve with him will, too.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON.) The time of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands has expired.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 15 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would object to anything more than 5 minutes. A couple of us have been waiting quite a while. I certainly respect the opportunity for the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) to respond, so I would not object to 5 minutes. But I would object for more than that.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman will yield, it is my honor to be able to rise to the occasion to salute a very important gentleman. It certainly is difficult, however, to speak about him in 1 minute.

Many of us know him as the Honorable WILLIAM L. CLAY of St. Louis, Missouri, also known as the "show me congressman." But I know him as teacher, as Mr. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as Mr. Working Americans and Families.

All that we have heard of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is that he is certainly not shy in engaging in advocacy for the voiceless. But I might take my colleagues back to a special time in our history so they can see how his political journey was formulated.

And 1968 was the first year of his election, the year of Martin Luther King's assassination and the assassination of Bobby Kennedy. How could the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) be any less than a warrior and a fighter for providing better education for our children and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, exploring and explaining the Hatch Act, making sure that if factories are closed the workers have protections and rights?

Oh, Mr. Speaker, I wish I had more time. I wish this body would refrain

from its rules and regulations and allow us to pay tribute to a man who deserves this great tribute.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is my friend. He is our historian. I will miss his eloquent words, his chastising, but, most of all, your fight and your heart. How could a man who saw the death of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy be any less?

We look forward to his son. We thank him for his daughter, his wife, and all of his family. We thank him for St. Louis, Missouri, for sending us their native son, the "show me congressman."

I believe he is the kind of congressman that will never sing the refrain "we shall overcome" but the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) will sing the song "we have overcome."

For those of this body who did not have the honor nor the pleasure of working with the Dean of the Missouri Delegation, the first thing I would like to share with you was his deep commitment to working on the behalf of working men and women of America. When it came down to a vote on a labor bill, BILL CLAY would insist that he be shown how it would help working people in his district and across this nation.

Congressman CLAY is a native of Saint Louis, Missouri and was first elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1968. Because of his commitment to labor he selected Committees whose primary business deals with labor issues. Because of his skill in the area of labor he has reached the position of senior member of the Education and the Workforce Committee. The committee was known as the Education and Labor Committee when the House was controlled by Democrats, but in 1994 when the Republicans took control of the House the committee was renamed the Education Employment Opportunities Committee, also called the EEOC to the consternation of the Republicans.

Congressman CLAY was also a champion of education and played a key role in the reauthorization of the elementary and Secondary Education Act, including efforts to reduce early grade class sizes by hiring 100,000 teachers nationwide. He has also been leading the way for our nation's schools to be first in getting the resources necessary for school construction, renovation and modernization. His work in education has also included winning concessions from the Republicans to increase the amount of Pell Grant funding and the reduction of student loan interest rates. In addition, he has been a moving force behind securing increased support for Historically Black Colleges through Title III of the Higher Education Act. Congressman CLAY has been a leader on the issue of education, which reflects the dynamic and diverse institutions of higher learning that are found in this great nation. Congressman CLAY authored the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Capital Financing Act, which provides \$375 million in federal loan guarantees for construction and renovation projects at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

He was the draftsman and the builder of an impressive pro-workers rights legislative agen-

da that is not equaled by any other senior members of the Congressional Black Caucus. He was one of the first man in Congress to really put families first with his sponsorship of the Family and Medical Leave Improvements Act to extend coverage of the current law.

Congressman CLAY has also taken on the tough job of reforming the Hatch Act, which existed to separate public service from partisan politics, but not separate federal workers for their right to free speech and freedom of assembly. For this reason, he has worked to ensure that Federal and postal workers had the same rights to participate in politics that are allowed to other citizens.

Congressman CLAY has also brought sanity to our nation's pension plans at a time when many were in doubt of meeting their promise to America's older workers. He led the effort to reform our nation's pension laws, including legislation to protect employees from raids on their pension plans. He championed legislation to prevent age-based discrimination in employee benefits, and sponsored legislation to provide continued health insurance coverage through employer pension plans under COBRA for those separated from their employment.

On the behalf of the thousands of plant workers in and around the City of Houston, I would like to thank Congressman CLAY for seeing that it was the law of our country that plant closings must give 60 days advanced notice or 60 days of pay to employees for failure to notify them of a closure.

Congressman CLAY was the founder of the William L. Clay Scholarship Research Fund, a non-profit, tax-exempt scholarship program, which has enabled over 100 Saint Louis area students to attend colleges.

I would like to join my colleagues in saluting Congressman BILL CLAY for a job well done. He has stayed the course and made a positive difference in the lives of average working Americans and their families. Congressman CLAY, I along with the thousands of others who are inspired by your efforts in government would like to thank you for selecting public service as your life's vocation.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, let me just say that it is with a deep sense of admiration and gratitude actually that I join my colleagues in honor and recognizing a true warrior and a giant of a man, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

I have had the privilege of knowing the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) since 1975, actually, when I joined the staff of another great leader, the Honorable Ron Dellums. Then, as now, serving with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) in this great House, I continue to marvel at his intellect and his insight and his total commitment to social political and economic justice.

Yet, his sense of humor, his compassion, and his big heart never ceases to amaze me. He is a true trail blazer. And I will actually miss his thoughtful reflections and analysis that really always kept us on track.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) understood the power of coal-

tion building and the clout of a unified Black Caucus way back when. We today are benefitting from his insight, his clarity and his understanding. He is truly a Member who has not only talked the talk, but he has walked the walk and he has shown us what a true statesman can and should be.

So I just want to thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) for everything that he has done, for all that he has taught us, and just say that I will miss looking up there and seeing those votes oftentimes with that one or two red votes next to him being in the real minority in terms of doing the right thing in terms of standing for principle and honesty and integrity.

I wish him a wonderful next chapter of his life.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, it has been my privilege to manage this hour of tribute to the gentleman from the First District of Missouri (Mr. CLAY), a steadfast champion of education, labor, and the founding member the Congressional Black Caucus.

We have heard but a few of the accomplishments and contributions of the gentleman in this short hour, and I associate myself with all of the prior remarks. Truly he has left a rich legacy in labor. And in education he has been to minority education what his long-term friend and colleague Congressman Stokes has been to the cause of minority health.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) will leave a great void, but we will fill it with his rich legacy. I am pleased to join my colleagues in saying thank you on behalf of this body and our Nation. I would say thank you also to his dear wife, Carol, and his family for sharing him with us.

Godspeed and God bless as he leaves this body. But I am sure he is not leaving a life of service and many, many more contributions to his country.

We thank him very much for his service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD) has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. FORD was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, so much has been said about the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY). Not enough can be said. I have happened to have the chance to know him or he has known me all of my life. My dad was his colleague in Congress for more than 22 years.

Lacey and Michelle, and I know we cannot campaign from this body, but he is a Democratic nominee for Congress there in the First District, and I certainly wish him the very best of luck. He comes from such great genes.

I want to tell just one story, I was in college at the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker, and a group of us

started a monthly newspaper there. We sought donations for the start of this newspaper because we wanted to maintain its independence from the university, not in hostility to the university but wanting to have an independent voice on campus.

I sent out solicitation letters to all of my dad's friends and all of his colleagues. And he has some wonderful colleagues, the Rangels, the Grays, and the Waters, and there are so many others, the Stokes that he served with, the best friend of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

I will never forget going to the mailbox and here I was 19 years old in college, Mr. Speaker, and receiving this envelope from the office of (Mr. CLAY), \$500 donation, for this newspaper. The newspaper started and was run by young people at the school, and it is still in existence today in the spirit in which he provided all those scholarships for children throughout his district and throughout the State of Missouri.

I am also one youngster whose life he touched and impacted. I would not be in the Congress today but for work he did here in the United States in opening doors and creating opportunities and chronicling the history of not only African-Americans here in the Congress but great Americans here in the Congress.

On behalf of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) and all the young members of Congress, I want to say thank you for his leadership and thank you for his service. Aunt Carol has been a gem and a treasure to all of us here in the Congress, certainly those of us who have grown up around her.

I look forward to serving with Lacy and Michelle and Angela and Clay and Michael. I love your grandchildren and I love the family. I just want to say thank you for all that he has done, all that he will continue to do, and all that he has meant to this great body.

SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY).

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that, for those who are watching on television and are not familiar with the rules of the House, we had 1 hour for this special order and it is now extending into the next hour that the gentleman has reserved and he has a plane to catch. So I certainly appreciate him allowing me just to say how overwhelmed I am

by the expressions of support and of appreciation of kindness and the friendship that have been expressed on this House floor today.

Let me say that I come from a family of seven children. My mother and father always taught each of us that modesty should never prevail over truth. So, in that vein and with that understanding, I accept all of the accolades that have been bestowed on me this afternoon because they are true. That is part of the whit that they talk about, Mr. Speaker.

Let me seriously, though, thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman CLYBURN) and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus for sponsoring this tribute in honor of my years of service in the Congress.

I also want to thank my other colleagues for their expressions of commendation for my work in this great body.

In my 32 years in Congress, I can only remember a few tributes such as this one. The last one that stands out for me was the one for my good friend, Lewis Stokes, at the end of the last Congress.

Let me also offer a special word of thanks and appreciation to my friend and our minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), and the other members of the Missouri delegation for their support throughout the years we have served together.

I also want to thank the members on the Committee on Education and Workforce who have inserted statements into the RECORD on behalf of my contribution to this Congress.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my wife and children for their patience, for their understanding, and for their acceptance and participation at every level and every phase of my journey.

Once again, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me and I thank the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands for handling this special order.

Mr. Speaker, I am overwhelmed by the expressions of support and appreciation, kindness and friendship, so I accept accolades because they are true. I want to thank Chairman CLYBURN and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus for sponsoring this tribute in honor of my years of service in the Congress. I also want to thank all other colleagues for their expressions of praise and commendation for my work in this great body. In my 32 years in Congress, I can only remember a few tributes such as this one, the last one that stands out was the one for my good friend, Louis Stokes at the end of the last Congress.

Let me also offer a special word of thanks and appreciation to my friend and our Minority Leader DICK GEPHARDT and the other members of the Missouri delegation for their support throughout the years we have served together.

Those of us in the profession of politics know that like other careers, we cannot be successful without support from many quar-

ters. Recognizing that, I want to express my deepest appreciation to a great staff, to the thousands of friends and constituents for their continuous support, and to the voters of the 1st Congressional District of Missouri who 16 times went to the voting booth and elected me to this great office.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my wife and children for their patience, understanding—and for their acceptance and participation at every level and in every phase of my journey.

During my tenure, there have been many highlights. Some stand out brighter than others. Perhaps one of the greatest was having the privilege of being one of the founders of the Congressional Black Caucus. Thirty-two years ago, Shirley Chisholm, Lou Stokes, and I came to Washington the same day. It was historic. Three blacks elected at one time. We joined six others and became the largest number of African Americans to serve in Congress at one time. The three of us were determined to seize the moment, to fight for justice, to raise issues too long ignored and too little debated. We were described by the media as militant, aggressive new leaders determined to make changes in the way black members of Congress had been viewed in the past. And we wasted no time seeking to establish a forum for articulating our concerns. That medium was the founding of the Congressional Black Caucus. It has served its purpose well.

I am also proud of the role I have played in helping to create new programs to address the problems of millions of Americans. During my life in this institution, I have been privileged to personally participate in the drafting and passage of many landmark pieces of legislation—coal mine safety, ERISA, Black Lung Benefits Act, the first appropriations for sickle cell disease research, the direct student loan program, the civil service program, OSHA, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I am even more proud of legislation that bears my name as primary sponsor or that I managed successfully on the floor of this House: reduction of pension vesting from 10 years to 5 years, Hatch Act reform, 60 days plant closing notification, the minimum wage increase of 1996, COBRA legislation that will continue employee health plans after job separation, financial assistance to enhance and preserve historically black colleges, the several reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act, enhanced support for Hispanic serving institutions, IDEA, class size reduction and family and medical leave.

Thanks to many of you in this Chamber, I have been able to fashion and to pass the kind of legislation that has improved the standard of living and the quality of life for millions of our citizens.

Serving in the United States Congress is one of the greatest honors that is possible to bestow upon an American citizen. In the 224 year history of this country, less than 10,000 American have enjoyed the distinction of serving in the House of Representatives.

To those who will have the honor and privilege of being elected to serve in the next Congress for the first time, I would like to offer one small but important bit of advice—always remember the awesome consequences, nationally and internationally, of your decisions. We